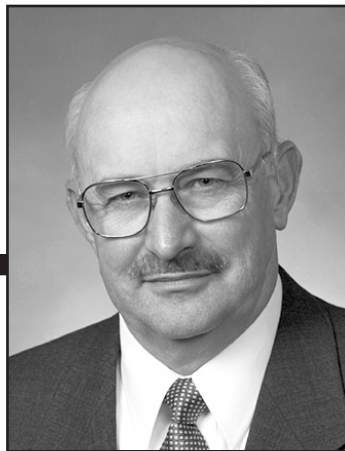




**Rep. Mary Skinner**



**Rep. Jim Clements**

# 14<sup>th</sup> District

## **2006 Session Priorities – Our commitment to you**

Dear friends,

Citizens expect their lawmakers to work together to solve problems. We concur. The majority of legislation that becomes law each year passes with strong bipartisan support. While we respect our colleagues across the aisle, we don't always agree with them.

Prior to the 2006 session, House and Senate Republican leaders gathered to form an agenda representing our commitment to you, the citizens of Washington. During the course of this session, our priorities will differ from those of the majority party.

Our differences become apparent when debating such fundamental issues as education, health care, public safety, taxes and spending, and the role of government and the rights of citizens.

From what we saw the first day of the 2006 legislative session, when the majority Democrats sidelined strong new Republican legislation against sex offenders, the contrasts are already showing.

Please read our 14th District priorities and see how they fit into the commitment we and other Republicans have made to our citizens.

It has been an honor to serve as your representatives for 12 years. Contact us when you think we can help you.

Mary Skinner  
360-786-7810

Jim Clements  
360-786-7856

**Toll-free hotline: 1-800-562-6000**

## **BUDGET**

**Our commitment:** *Put government on a budget by restoring voter-approved tax and spending limits.*

This session the Legislature will adopt a supplemental budget. When a two-year budget is passed, no one can anticipate changes in school enrollments or prison populations, or the amount the state will spend fighting wildfires. The supplemental budget is intended to make mid-term adjustments to cover costs.

The supplemental budget proposed by the governor in December would cover more than the unanticipated costs. The budget spends another half-billion dollars on new programs or services. The state treasury is nearly \$1.5 billion dollars in the black – on paper – due to a strong real estate market and construction activity. However, this is anticipated to slow. Now is not the time to add to the state's spending commitments.

Our concern is a repeat of 2005. The governor said her budget proposal was unsustainable, then joined with the House and Senate Democrats to enact a budget containing even more spending and tax increases.

Fortunately, Jim continues to serve on the House Appropriations Committee. He is in the position to call for a return to the "Priorities of Government" budgeting that doesn't rely on tax increases.

However, a solution is to change our state Constitution, set a spending limit, and require more than a simple majority vote to increase taxes. The spending limit created by voters was discarded by the majority party in 2005. They also suspended the I-601 requirement that tax increases needed a two-thirds majority vote. If they control the lawmaking process in 2007, nothing prevents them from uncontrolled spending. We believe the best way to protect taxpayers is to amend our Constitution.



# Rep. Mary Skinner

# Rep. Jim Clements

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Our commitment:** *Guard and protect our children from sex offenders.*



This topic has taken center stage in Olympia because of Jim's relentless energy last year to pass legislation (House Bill 1147, the community protection zone bill he and Mary sponsored) and create a task force to address this growing problem. He's using as a template the case of accused killer Joseph Duncan, released from Washington prisons with no strings attached after only 20 years – despite strong evidence he posed a clear and ever-present danger to children.

Jim feels the Duncan case symbolizes how our criminal justice system has lost its way – pouring millions into reactive measures after children and their families have become victims and these predators have brought such grief into their lives. Jim believes our dollars should go first to proactive programs, laws and policies that help guard and protect our children. The notion that the trusted individual who rapes a child who is a family member or friend could receive less punishment than the same person who rapes or molests an unknown child across the street is an insane argument.

Sex offenders who fail to register should go back to prison, as should those who violate community protection zones or any city ordinance restricting their residency. In the Duncan-type cases, our death penalty laws should be used more, rather than not at all. Pressure should be put on the liberal courts to get some backbone. We need to learn to let go, and stop spending millions trying to defend and treat these terrible people.



*Rep. Clements led a legislative task force which looked closely at issues surrounding the placement of sex offenders in our communities.*

## AGRICULTURE

**Our commitment:** *Strengthen the family farm by providing tax relief, allowing families to use their land as intended, and ensuring access to water.*



The Legislature has been quick to support the needs of our aerospace and high-tech industries. However, agriculture doesn't receive as much attention, even though it is Washington's top job-producing industry.

Water management continues to be an issue that brings out the differences between Republicans and Democrats. We remain optimistic that the Pine Hollow reservoir project, spearheaded by Jim, will continue to move forward without further legislative action. However, Republicans will be introducing legislation concerning other water storage and regional water supply solutions. We'll promote water conservation and removal of regulatory barriers to the efficient use and transfer of agricultural water, including easing "use it or lose it" provisions.

Because agriculture is so labor-intensive, it is particularly affected by increases in the state-run unemployment insurance and industrial insurance (workers' compensation) systems. They are among the costliest, least-efficient systems of any state as well as the regular increases in the minimum wage. These higher labor costs make it difficult for our growers and producers (as well as employers in other industries) to compete in a worldwide market league with players such as California and China.

Mary, who serves on the House Economic Development, Agriculture and Trade Committee, continues to maintain a strong voice in support of our local farmers. This session we are supporting legislation that seeks to remove government barriers that place Washington farmers and processors at a disadvantage, including:

- Eliminate sales tax on dyed (off-road) diesel used for agricultural purposes, and on farm equipment purchases;
- Provide property tax exemptions or credits for land used to produce renewable fuel crops, and exempt the equipment used to produce those crops from sales tax;
- Protect farmers' property rights by opposing the inconsistent application of setbacks/buffers and bringing land use planning back to the local level, among other changes;
- Support state funding to sustain agriculture, including agricultural research, technical assistance, and infrastructure improvements.

# 2006 Session Priorities – Our commitment to you



*Rep. Mary Skinner recently hosted Americorps workers from Yakima to the State Capitol. From left, Mary Uribe, Brett McCombs, Rep. Skinner, Tiffany Behler and Christina Storey.*

## **JOBS and ECONOMY**

**Our commitment:** *Get government out of the way of job growth by removing the regulatory burdens on small business, repealing the death tax, and reforming unemployment insurance.*



Would you believe that state regulation has expanded to fill 32 phonebook-sized volumes – a stack of paper more than five feet tall? Add to that the high costs of workers' compensation, unemployment insurance challenges, and the highest minimum wage rate in the nation. No wonder small businesses are often not able to survive the first five years.

We support policies that reduce onerous regulations and ensure state government will be working with businesses, not erecting barriers against them. When businesses succeed in creating more jobs, we have a better economy and quality of life in Washington. More jobs: That's our goal.

## **HEALTH CARE**

**Our commitment:** *Give health care back to patients by allowing affordable, tailored choices that work best for them and their families.*



Health insurance mandates escalate the cost of health care by as much as 50 percent. Washington has 49 mandates – offerings such as massage therapy and acupuncture. Many small businesses are unable to afford coverage for their employees due to the massive number of mandates.

For health insurance to become more affordable, we need to address cost-driving regulations. Mary, as a member of the House Health Care Committee, has offered solutions that we both support: decreasing government mandates; giving employers greater flexibility to offer to working families affordable basic health coverage; promoting consumer-driven private health insurance and Health Savings Accounts; and enacting liability reforms to control the spiraling cost of medical malpractice insurance.

## **EDUCATION**

**Our commitment:** *Help every student achieve WASL standards and graduate on time by offering remedial classes, tutors, and expanded summer school programs.*



The class of 2008 represents a significant crossroad in our public education system. In order to graduate, students will be required to pass the WASL.

Both of us, former teachers in the public school system, recognize the need for assessments to ensure the success of our children. Instead of lowering the standards, we need to provide resources necessary in our public schools, so our students are prepared for the changing world economy awaiting them.

## **OUR OTHER COMMITMENTS:**

- AIM for safer neighborhoods through enhanced penalties for Auto theft, Identity theft and Methamphetamine production.
- Welcome families to our state parks by eliminating the day use fee.
- Help needy families by reducing energy costs.
- Allow citizens and their elected representatives — not the courts — to decide the definition of marriage.
- Protect property rights and prevent government from taking property without compensation.

# 14<sup>th</sup> District



# We're here to serve you as well as represent you!

Remember, legislators are elected to serve you.  
If you are facing challenges working with a state  
agency or need other assistance, contact us.

## Rep. Mary Skinner

### House Republican Caucus Vice Chair

434 John L. O'Brien Bldg.

P.O. Box 40600

Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Phone: (360) 786-7810

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Web site: <http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/members/skinner.htm>

#### Committees:

- Economic Development, Agriculture and Trade -  
*Assistant Ranking Republican*
- Health Care
- Transportation - *Assistant Ranking Republican*

## Rep. Jim Clements

### House Republican Whip

410 John L. O'Brien Bldg.

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Phone: (360) 786-7856

Web site: <http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/member/clements.htm>

#### Committees:

- State Government Operations and Accountability -  
*Assistant Ranking Republican*
- Appropriations
- Capital Budget

**Internet Information:** <http://www.leg.wa.gov> • <http://hrc.leg.wa.gov>

**Toll-free hotline: 1-800-562-6000**

## It's a Senior Saturday! Mark your calendars!

Join Mary for a "Senior Saturday" town hall meeting where you will have the opportunity to discuss current issues affecting seniors in the 14th District.

Mary will offer information about the new Medicare prescription drug program to help clear the confusion among plans. Also, she recently returned from the White House Conference on Aging in Washington, D.C., and will provide a report of senior issues discussed at the federal level. She will answer questions, and listen to your concerns and suggestions, including long-term care.

Come join her!

**WHEN:** Saturday, Feb. 18, 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** Harman Center, 101 North 65th Ave., Yakima

*Refreshments  
will be served.*

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Our commitment to you**

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